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Testimony of Rep. Mary Mushinsky (85th) in Support of PHB 5002, An Act Concerning the
Development of a Green New Deal

Before the Energy and Technology Committee
Public Hearing Feb. 21, 2019

10:00 a.m. Rm 1B

Connecticut faces a much tighter deadline to improve energy efficiency and switch to clean energy now that the IPCC has shortened the timetable to reduce CO2 emissions to 12 years if we are to avoid unstoppable climate change. The 12-year window is very small while the effort we will need to make is enormous. If we fail, the repercussions for CT and our families will be severe: expensive storm damage; loss of water supplies; increased power demand; the need to move roads, railroads, highways, and sewage treatment plants; dislocation of residents; increased tropical disease vectors; agricultural losses; and additional world conflicts which will affect the safety of our families including members in military service.

In response to the 12-year timetable, it is wise for our state to concentrate on creating jobs and apprenticeships in the green energy and energy efficiency fields. Even before the IPCC report, The Program Review and Investigations Committee in 2009 identified green technology careers as well-suited for Connecticut. They recommended state agencies work together to create and publicize a green jobs career ladder, laying out the rungs from low skilled insulation and weatherization jobs to higher skilled apprenticeships, installers and energy management positions. The bill to do this is HB 5828 in Higher Education and Employment Enhancement Committee; the content should be added to this Green New Deal bill.

Other ingredients of this bill should include funding: the restoration and an annual audit of the three green energy funds that the legislature raided to balance the budget in 2017 (an idea contained in HB 6453); reversal of the weakened solar energy purchase rates that the legislature authorized in SB 9 in 2018 (the focus of HB 6633); an increase in CT wind power to 2000 MW (per bills HB 6839, 6418, 6425) and professional installation of solar energy using state certified apprenticeships (HB 6630).